



## Guidelines on Holidays

### No. 4315

**Policy Effective Date:**  
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**Affected Parties:**  
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### 1.0 Purpose

The following guidelines describe the provisions for eligible employees to receive paid time off for specific workdays observed as holidays, or to earn holiday pay and/or compensatory leave as a result of working on a designated holiday. A list of the holidays observed by the Commonwealth of Virginia and Virginia Tech is provided. The guidelines were developed to ensure compliance with the [Department of Human Resource Management, Holidays Policy 4.25](#).

### 2.0 Policy

The following days are observed as holidays for faculty, classified and university staff. The university is closed between December 25 and January 1 each year (“Winter Break”).

#### 2.1 Holidays/Dates

New Year's Day - January 1  
Martin Luther King Day - Third Monday in January  
Memorial Day - Last Monday in May  
Juneteenth - June 19  
Independence Day - July 4  
Labor Day - First Monday in September  
Thanksgiving Day - Fourth Thursday in November  
Friday after Thanksgiving  
Christmas Day - December 25

Winter Break<sup>1</sup> - The university is closed between December 25 and January 1 each year, and the four days comprising winter break are treated as holidays.

Any other workday designated by the President of the university, the Governor of Virginia, or the President of the United States.

Holidays occurring on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday; holidays occurring on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

Emergency personnel may be required to work on holidays.

<sup>1</sup>As a result of the university's alternate holiday schedule, additional holidays observed by the Commonwealth of Virginia including George Washington Day (third Monday in February), Columbus Day and Yorktown Victory Day (second Monday in October), Election Day (Tuesday following the first Monday in November), and Veterans Day (November 11) are instead recognized during the Winter Break, allowing for continuity of operations during the normal academic calendar. Virginia Tech remains open these days, and the time for these holidays is deferred to Winter Break.



## 2.2 Accrued Compensatory Leave

1. Emergency employees working a holiday will receive a compensatory day that must be used before that holiday reoccurs (within the next year). If authorized, overtime leave may be carried over from one year to the next. When an employee with an overtime leave balance separates from the university or transfers to another state agency, overtime leave balances must be paid out in accordance with University Policy No. 4320, Guidelines for the Fair Labor Standards Act.
2. In order to receive pay for a holiday, an employee must be in a paid status the entire workday before and the entire workday after the holiday.
3. Full-time employees will receive 8 hours of compensatory leave for each qualifying holiday worked, regardless of the work schedule. Part-time employees who work on a holiday will receive compensatory leave on a pro-rata basis – equivalent to the percentage of employment. (For example, a staff member who works 50% FTE (part time), or 20 hours per week, will receive 4 hours of compensatory leave for each qualifying holiday worked).
4. For staff employees, unexpired compensatory holiday leave is paid out upon separation.
5. An employee cannot charge holiday leave when on approved disability and receiving short-term disability pay provided by VSDP. The holiday must be recorded as VSDP unless it occurs during the initial 7-day waiting period. Additionally, no compensatory leave is accrued.
6. If a holiday falls on an employee's rest day, other than a Saturday or Sunday, the employee will be awarded compensatory leave for that day.
7. An employee on any type of approved leave status with pay (i.e., annual, sick, or overtime) on a holiday will charge holiday leave for that day. Please see holiday leave limitation applying when an employee is on approved disability and receiving short-term disability pay provided by VSDP already addressed in Section 2.2 #5 above.
8. If a holiday falls on the last day of the month and the employee will retire on the first day of the following month, the employee will receive pay for the holiday if the employee worked, or was in a paid status, the entire work day before the holiday.
9. If the first day on the job is a holiday and is also the first day of the pay period, the employee will earn the holiday(s) if they work the following scheduled full workday.
10. Likewise, if the separation or retirement date falls on a holiday and the employee works the day before or is on paid leave, the holiday is earned.

## 2.3 Accommodations for Religious Holidays

Departments should make reasonable accommodation for religious holiday needs of employees as long as such accommodation will not impede normal university operations.

1. If an employee requests a day off to observe a religious holiday that falls during the employee's normal work schedule, reasonable efforts should be made to accommodate the request. Employees are encouraged to request leave in advance in order for the accommodation to be considered.



2. A request for time off for a religious holiday should be denied only if the supervisor determines that the employee's absence would impede the department from conducting business. Management should document and be prepared to support the decision.

Time off for religious holidays shall be charged to appropriate leave balances or to leave-without-pay. It is the employee's responsibility to understand the effects of leave-without-pay status on other benefits.

## 2.4 Winter Break Closing

The university is closed between December 25 and January 1 each year ("Winter Break"). The university has shifted four state holidays (George Washington Day, Columbus Day and Yorktown Victory Day, Election Day, and Veterans Day) to the Winter Break, and the four days that comprise Winter Break are treated as holidays. Emergency personnel may be required to work during the Winter Break. All other employees not designated as emergency personnel may not work during the Winter Break unless such work is approved prior to the Winter Break and based on the discretion of the department head as it relates to a justified business need. Employees are not required to submit leave and will continue to be paid during the Winter Break, subject to eligibility as described in Section 2.2 above. The leave system will automatically record the leave abbreviation "H" as holiday when the university is closed for the Winter Break. This policy and holiday schedule includes any additional holiday time during the Winter Break granted by the Governor.

Certain departments may remain open due to the nature of the work, including, but not limited to, employees working during the Winter Session, employees responsible for the care of animals, or employees required to maintain the utility functions of the university; in some cases, minimal or full staffing may be necessary. Each department head has the authority to designate the employees required to work during the Winter Break to support necessary university or departmental operations or functions. Normal holiday compensatory leave policies will apply when employees work on one of the officially designated university holidays, including Winter Break.

During the Winter Break, departments must make arrangements to retrieve communications (e.g., voicemail, e-mail, etc.) on a regular basis from the public and provide a timely and appropriate response.

## 3.0 Procedures

The [Leave and Time Worked Reporting System](#) is used to report all types of leave by all salaried faculty and staff. The leave system will automatically record the leave abbreviation "H" as holiday taken when the university is closed for holidays.

## 4.0 Definitions

**Central Workplace:** The university location where the employee normally performs his/her duties.

**Emergency Personnel:** For the purpose of this policy, emergency personnel are those employees assigned to positions identified by their departments as necessary to the maintenance of the vital operations and services of the university. Employees designated as emergency personnel are expected to be prepared and available to report to or remain at the employer's central workplace during authorized closings or holidays as determined by their department. If emergency personnel are required to report to work at the employer's central workplace, such personnel must work when classes are cancelled and during other periods of authorized closing or holidays.

**Staff:** Defined as salaried non-faculty employees and includes Classified Staff and University Staff.



## 5.0 References

Virginia Department of Human Resource Management, Policy 4.25, Holidays  
[https://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/hrpolicy/pol4\\_25.pdf](https://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/hrpolicy/pol4_25.pdf)

Policy 4010, Policies Governing University Staff  
<https://policies.vt.edu/assets/4010.pdf>

Policy 4320, Guidelines for the Fair Labor Standards Act  
<https://policies.vt.edu/assets/4320.pdf>

## 6.0 Approval and Revisions

- Revision 3  
Updated to remove variable "dates" from holiday list. Information included in Section 2.3 about accommodations for religious holidays and in Section 2.4 about the week between Christmas and New Year's Day.  
Approved November 15, 1993 by Associate Vice President for Personnel and Administrative Services, Ann Spencer.
- Revision 4  
Section 2.0 was updated to clarify university department head's flexibility to close departments on nationally observed holidays if the university is not closed.  
Approved January 5, 1996, by Associate Vice President for Personnel and Administrative Services, Ann Spencer.
- Revision 5
  - Section 1.0: Deletion of references to *Faculty Handbook* and *Commonwealth of Virginia Employee Handbook*.
  - Established links to websites for referenced policies.
  - Section 3.0 Procedures: New instructions were added for leave reporting to coincide with the new electronic leave system implemented in January 1999.
- Revision 6  
Addition of the holiday of Martin Luther King Day - Friday before the Third Monday in January.  
Approved September 8, 2000 by Assistant Vice President for Personnel Services, Linda S. Woodard.  
October 10, 2001: Technical corrections to update policy links and name change for the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Human Resource Management (formerly Department of Personnel and Training).
- Revision 7
  - Section 2.2. Accrued Compensatory Leave – Clarification of leave accrual and while on short-term disability.
  - Clarification of leave system updates in Section 3. ProceduresApproved April 16, 2002 by Vice President for Budget and Financial Management, M. Dwight Shelton, Jr.



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- Revision 8  
September 1, 2006: Technical revisions to include University Staff in accordance with resolution approved by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors June 12, 2006 to cover University Staff under policies identical to the current human resources policies until the new human resources system is developed.
- Revision 9  
September 1, 2007: Technical revisions to correct holiday names to be consistent with the State's Holiday Policy and clarification that the Department Head has the authority to close during the winter break "for business reasons."  
Approved September 1, 2007 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson
- Revision 10  
Section 2.1: Resolution passed by the Board of Visitors on March 31, 2008, closing the university on Martin Luther King Day.  
Approved November 5, 2008 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.  
  
Annual review June 1, 2010 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson. No revisions.
- Revision 11  
Section 2.4: Resolution passed by the Board of Visitors on June 7, 2010 closing the university for the week between December 25 and January 1.  
Approved November 4, 2011 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.
- Revision 12
  - Section 2.2: Amended to ensure consistency with state policy which allows for straight time pay or compensatory leave to be used as compensation for holidays worked.
  - Section 2.5: Added a footnote regarding exemption from reduction in wages for employees on H1B visas during the winter break closing.Approved May 16, 2014 by Vice President for Administration, Sherwood G. Wilson.
- Revision 13  
Updated section 3 with information regarding the new Leave and Time Worked Reporting System.  
Approved January 4, 2017 by Vice President for Administration, Sherwood G. Wilson.
- Revision 14  
Section 2.1: Designation of Labor Day as a nationally observed holiday when classes are not in session and the university is normally closed with only essential personnel designated to work. Already a holiday for staff, Labor Day now becomes a holiday for faculty also.  
Passed April 10, 2017 by University Council.  
Approved April 10, 2017 by President Timothy D. Sands.
- Revision 15  
Technical updates to web links, grammar, and placement of footers.  
Section 2.0: Moved language from opening paragraph to follow list of holidays in Section 2.1.  
Section 2.1: Removed and added holidays pursuant to current state legislation and DHRM policy.



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Section 2.2: Clarified by adding the language in quotations to the existing provision, 4. An employee cannot charge holiday leave when on full disability and receiving short-term disability pay provided by VSDP. The holiday must be recorded as VSDP “unless it occurs during the initial 7-day waiting period.”

Approved August 10, 2020 by Bryan Garey, Vice President for Human Resources.

- Revision 16

Technical update to change references from “essential” to “emergency” personnel or employees.

Section 2.1: Added Juneteenth as a university holiday for staff and faculty, pursuant to federal and state legislation, when classes are not in session and the university is closed with only emergency personnel designated to work.

Passed April 18, 2022 by University Council.

Approved April 18, 2022 by President Timothy D. Sands.

- Revision 17

- Technical updates to leave reporting weblink and references to Winter Break.
- Sections 2.1, 2.4, 3.0, and Footnote 1: Revised to reflect the university’s decision to shift four state holidays (George Washington Day, Columbus Day and Yorktown Victory Day, Election Day, and Veterans Day) to Winter Break (December 25 through January 1) for all employees.
- Section 4.0: Added definitions for “Central Workplace” and “Emergency Personnel.”

Approved January 10, 2024 by Bryan Garey, Vice President for Human Resources.